

Agency/Component: Environmental Protection Agency

Kimberly A. Lewis

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Director, Office of Human Resources

EPA Lead for Hiring Reform Initiative

2010 Hiring Reform Action Plan

Hiring Reform Initiative:

1. Eliminating any requirement that applicants respond to essay-style questions when first applying for Federal employment

Date:

August 1, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed:

Information provided in essays is regarded as beneficial to evaluating the qualifications of applicants. Eliminating this information entirely is not advantageous to the Agency, and requesting it at a later stage may add time to the hiring process.

Essay questions provide human resources (HR) staff and selecting officials' additional information that can be utilized, in conjunction with the resume, to substantiate whether an applicant possesses the required qualifying experience. Eliminating essay questions at the initial assessment/review stage will hamper our ability to identify key questions for this purpose.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?):

Based upon information provided in resumes, subsequent interviews and in some cases knowledge of applicants' background, managers and many in the HR community believe that some applicants substantially exaggerate their 'self-scores.' Managers are anxious to make successful selections of high-quality candidates but are impatient with what they consider 'gamed' responses to ensure that one makes the certificate and has a chance at getting interviewed. Managers (and HR staff) believe they are better able to verify applicants' claimed level of experience by reviewing essay questions that require applicants to describe their involvement in actual job-related activities. Eliminating these in the first round of assessment may limit the information that the human resources specialist/selecting official can review/evaluate to determine that the candidate possesses the required qualifying experience and to ensure that we can attract well-qualified applicant pools. These concerns decrease hiring manager satisfaction scores and lead them to claim that HR certifies candidates who do not qualify or who are not among the 'best-qualified.' We will explore rating tools that limit candidates' ability to exaggerate their scores and help identify best-qualified candidates without relying on essay-style questions.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks:

A valid and consistent recruitment process that results in providing the selecting official with highly-qualified candidates in a timely manner.

Metric: SSC issues certificate of eligibles to the selecting official within established timeframe standards after the close of the announcement.

Primary Action Planning Team

Champion: Sheron Johnson, Director, Shared Service Center-Las Vegas

Members: SSCs, Regional HROs, PMOs, OHR, hiring managers and SMEs from across the Agency, and applicants.

Action Steps

| Actions to be Taken | Key Deliverables/Output | Start Date/ End Date | Responsible Party (Parties) | Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|---|
| 1a) Alternative options for use of essay-style questions - Work with OPM to determine options available for assessing applicants without using essay-style questions in determining qualified applicants at the initial stage of the application process. | Development of an alternative option to the essay questions and system modifications, as needed. | 8/1/10 - 10/30/10 | Office of Human Resources (OHR), Human Capital Management Division (HCMD), Information Technology Division (ITD), Shared Service Center (SSC) Directors Lead - <i>VirDella Denwiddie</i> | |
| 1b) Training on assessment questions - Provide training <i>and/or guidance</i> to Human Resource (HR) Specialists, Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs), other staff as appropriate on Assessment questions that help to adequately screen applicants to determine qualifications and rating level. Explore web-based training, train-the-trainer and benchmarking to mitigate costs. | HR and hiring community exhibit and apply knowledge and understanding of using effective assessment tools for the various job opportunity announcements (JOA) | by 09/30/10 | OHR-HCMD OHR-ITD SSC Directors Lead - <i>Gerri McCann</i> | Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly. |
| 1c) Revise standard operating practices/guidance to eliminate essay-style questions when applicants first apply. Test processes to determine when essay questions may be most effective in refining assessment process. Update agency software systems, as appropriate to utilize assessment tools. | Updated guidance / procedures. | 10/30/10 | SSC Directors, OHR-ITD OHR-Policy Lead – <i>Sheron Johnson</i> | |

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| 1d) Develop consistent written processes for determining when to down-score applicants whose responses to applicant questions and subsequent high scores are not substantiated by the type of experience indicated in their resume and any supporting documents they provide. | Guidance developed and implemented uniformly among the SSCs. | 9/01/10 - 10/30/10 | SSCs OHR-ITD Lead – <i>Pat Watson</i> | |
| 1e) Develop and implement assessment tools needed to assess applicants for top ten most common jobs. | Listing top ten positions and use of initial assessment tools. Expand to cover additional jobs on quarterly basis. | 9/01/10 - 12/30/10 | SSC Directors OHR-Policy OHR-HCMD OHR-ITD Lead – <i>Suzanne Roberts</i> | |
| 1f) Modify agency software systems to accommodate any additional assessment tools or “key” questions, as determined appropriate. Monitor process to ensure timeliness and effectiveness. | Timely and effective process for adding essay-style responses in later stage of assessment process. | Determine probability for implementation by 10/30/10 | OHR-ITD Lead – <i>Cathy McLaughlin</i> | Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly. |
| 1g) Benchmark best practices , including standard position descriptions (PD), Job Analyses and Vacancy Announcements; Alternative assessment (including behavior-based, competency-based, structured interviews, etc.) standing registers; phasing; and other innovative approaches. | Updated processes and procedures that simplify and streamline the recruitment process while attracting the best qualified and motivated employees. | Status update 10/30/10 Quarterly updates until complete. | SSC Directors OHR-HCMD OHR-ITD Lead – <i>Jacqueline Wynn-Bryant/ Sheron Johnson</i> | |
| 1h) Establish accountability framework for review of this initiative to determine effectiveness of hiring reform changes and impact on applicant and hiring managers’ satisfaction and to identify best practices that may be leveraged throughout the Agency. | System which provides feedback on action status and impact on survey responses. | 10/30/10 | OHR- HCMD, OHR-ITD, SSC Directors Lead – <i>Alan Bogus</i> | |

2010 Hiring Reform Action Plan

Hiring Reform Initiative:

2. Allowing individuals to apply for Federal employment by submitting resumes and cover letters or completing simple, plain language applications supported by valid, reliable assessment tools

Date:

August 1, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed:

Due to lawsuits and third party grievances managers do not want to give cursory or inappropriate consideration to applicants based on the presence of an unsolicited cover letter. This may lead to disputes over what the applicant later claims as additional information regarding his or her qualifications. If we decide to admit the use of cover letters we will need to provide specific guidance on what consideration to give information provided in cover letters since these are not normally part of our requested documents. The agency does not want to eliminate assessment questions entirely at the initial stage because we will have no way of determining relative qualifications.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?):

- Applicants are inconsistent about what information they provide and some may use cover letters to expand on experience not covered in the resume.
- Many managers and HR Specialists currently do not read cover letters as source documents to assess applicants' qualifications. Overall, hiring office managers and hiring operations staff are reluctant to allow receipt of cover letters without specific guidelines on what those might entail and the degree to which they must be considered as a source document. Managers are not adverse to cover letters but are not sure what consideration to give them.
- Unlike Resumex, the EZhire system the Agency uses screens on the basis of applicant responses to assessment questions.
- Resumes may not contain enough information.
- Cover letters may contain inappropriate information.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks:

A request for applicant documentation that is consistent, relatively simple and will lead to fair and equitable consideration of all applicants.

Metric: Manager and applicant satisfaction survey results show improvement.

Primary Action Planning Team

Champion: Pat Watson, Director, Shared Service Center-Cincinnati

Members: SSCs, Regional HROs, PMOs, OHR, hiring managers and SMEs from across the Agency

| Action Steps | | | | |
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| Actions to be Taken | Key Deliverables/Output | Start Date/ End Date | Responsible Party (Parties) | Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed |
| 2a) Explore acceptance of cover letters - Work with OPM to determine options available for assessing applicants resume / cover letters in determining qualified applicants. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear instructions on resume and cover letter content in the job announcement. | 9/01/10 - 10/30/10 | OHR, HCMD SSC Directors Lead – VirDella Denwiddie | |
| 2b) Develop and implement assessment tools needed to assess applicants for top ten most common jobs. Same as Action Item 1d. | <p>Listing and use of initial assessment tools.</p> <p>Expand to cover additional jobs on quarterly basis.</p> | 9/01/10 - 12/30/10 | SSC Directors OHR-Policy OHR-HCMD OHR-ITD Lead – Suzanne Roberts | |
| Same as 1d, above 2c) Develop consistent written processes for determining when to down-score applicants whose responses to applicant questions and subsequent high scores are not substantiated by the type of experience indicated in their resume and any supporting documents they provide. | Guidance developed and implemented uniformly among the SSCs. | 9/01/10 - 10/30/10 | SSCs OHR-ITD Lead - Pat Watson | |
| 2d) Establish accountability framework for review of this initiative to determine effectiveness of hiring reform changes and impact on applicant and hiring managers' satisfaction and to identify best practices that may be leveraged throughout the Agency. | System which provides feedback on action status and impact on survey responses. | 10/30/10 | OHR- HCMD, OHR-ITD, SSC Directors Lead – Alan Bogus | |

2010 Hiring Reform Action Plan

Hiring Reform Initiative:

3. Exercising the discretion under Section 3319 of title 5, United States Code to use “category rating” rather than the “rule of three” so that a larger number of qualified individuals can be considered for jobs. In accordance with merit systems principles and the requirements of title 5, United States Code, agencies must continue to use a valid, professionally developed method for assessing applicants.

Date:

August 1, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed:

EPA has recently issued Category Rating policy and is in process of training HR staff and hiring managers on key responsibilities and processes. We recognize the need to carefully define the categories, so that all applicants within a defined category have relatively equal qualifications and are perceived as equally qualified by hiring officials. The potential for us to receive an increased number of applications, while welcomed, may create additional time barriers for HR Specialists to review and refer an increased number of best-qualified candidates, and on hiring officials to consider and to interview additional candidates.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?):

We welcome the opportunity to discontinue use of the “rule of three” which managers perceived as overly limiting, particularly when they were aware of highly-regarded, qualified applicants who were not included in the certificate. This sometimes led to hiring managers challenging the certificate, (requiring reissuance if the challenge is upheld or cancellation if the hiring office declines to make a selection). These results impact hiring managers’ satisfaction and extend the time to hire. Category Rating will not eliminate these problems if we cannot ensure better quality certificates through use of better, yet streamlined assessment tools. There may be a substantial learning curve involved in adapting to/learning the category rating process outside the EZhire system and understanding EZhire system changes to accommodate new process.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks:

Most Hiring Actions are deemed successful as:

- A sufficient number of highly-qualified candidates are provided to the selecting official,
- The hiring manager is satisfied with the quality and number of candidates certified, and
- Hiring actions are not returned without a selection due to the lack of qualified candidates.

Metrics: Manager Satisfaction Survey results improve on quality and number of applicants provided to selecting official improves.

Manager Satisfaction Survey results improve on questions relating to human resources timeliness.

Percentage of human resources actions that result in selection(s) versus the percentage of human resources actions that did not result in a selection due to “lack of qualified applicants”.

Primary Action Planning Team

Champion: George Hammer, Acting Director, Human Resources Policy Division

Members: SSCs, Regional HROs, PMOs, OHR, hiring managers and SMEs from across the Agency

| Action Steps | | | | |
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| Actions to be Taken | Key Deliverables/Output | Start Date/ End Date | Responsible Party (Parties) | Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed |
| 3a) Ensure understanding of category rating process - Make certain that hiring managers, SMEs, HR specialists and others as appropriate are trained on how to use Category Rating (including how to define categories and chose questions that are appropriate to those definitions). (#6a1a - Source: FY09 Action Plan). Explore use of web-based training modules to defray training costs, increase access and availability to all. | Training provided on the policy/process to | 8/01/10 - 9/30/10 | OHR-Policy Division SSCs, OHR- HCMD Lead - George Hammer | Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly. |
| Same as 1d, above 3b) Develop consistent written processes for determining when to down-score applicants whose responses to applicant questions and subsequent high scores are not substantiated by the type of experience indicated in their resume and any supporting documents they provide. | Guidance developed and implemented uniformly among the SSCs Guidance for changing scores for applications under Merit Promotion based on applicable union agreement | 9/01/10 - 10/30/10 | SSCs OHR-ITD Lead - Pat Watson | |
| 3c) Increase coordination/collaboration with SMEs when screening applications for inclusion on certs (#6a2 - Source: FY09 Action Plan). | Collaborative interaction between SME and HR Specialist reflected in improved certificates and increased manager satisfaction | 10/30/10 On-going Provide quarterly updates | SSCs Lead - Pat Watson | |
| 3d) Implement Category Rating - Issue memorandum indicating start date for using category rating. | Managers receive increased and sufficient numbers of candidates who are of high quality and are satisfied with the selections made from these certificates. | 9/01/10 - 11/01/10 | SSCs Lead - George Hammer | |
| 3e) Establish accountability framework for review of this initiative to determine effectiveness of hiring reform changes and impact on applicant and hiring managers' satisfaction and to identify best practices that may be leveraged throughout the Agency. | System which provides feedback on action status and impact on survey responses. | 10/30/10 | OHR- HCMD, OHR-ITD, SSC Directors Lead – Alan Bogus | |

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| Completed Actions | | | | |
| Establish Agency-wide policy on the use of category rating where appropriate to expand applicants available to Selecting Official. (#6a1 - Source: FY09 Action Plan) | The Category Rating Policy has been revised and updated (HR Bulletin 10-004B, issued May 18, 2010) | Completed 5/18/10 | OHR-Policy Division <i>George Hammer</i> | |

2010 Hiring Reform Action Plan

Hiring Reform Initiative:

4. Make sure that managers and supervisors with responsibility for hiring are more fully involved in the hiring process, including planning current and future workforce requirements, identifying the skills required for the job, and being actively engaged in the recruitment and interviewing process (when interviews occur), and, beginning with the first performance review cycle starting after November 1, 2010, hold them accountable for recruiting and hiring highly qualified employees and supporting their successful transition into Federal service in order to advance greater achievement of agency missions.

Date:

August 1, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed:

Points of stagnation and misunderstanding exist in both the hiring offices and HR. The hiring office may introduce delays at each of three stages of the hiring process: validating need and requesting action, involvement in the job analysis and assessment strategy, and reviewing certificates/making selections. HR Specialists don't know how to best include hiring officials and SMEs or explain their role in the recruitment process. Hiring officials do not realize the value of their involvement in all stages of the process to ensure the quality of candidates on the certificate and to improve the selection and on-boarding of the best candidates.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?):

- The length of time to validate need and submit the request to the SSC may be caused by a number of issues within the program office such as internal approval processes, budget and FTE issues and the need to determine priorities (inadequate workforce planning). Additional delays may be caused by the need to develop a new position description or substantially rewrite an existing one before forwarding to the SSC.
- Confirming the job analysis may be hampered by a lack of knowledge of the hiring process, (differences between Merit Promotion and Delegated Examining recruitment; noncompetitive hiring authorities, how to develop a position description, the process of qualifying applicants) and the need for better collaboration between HR and hiring offices at each stage of the process. Furthermore, due to administrative staff support in many offices, hiring managers have traditionally relegated these functions to staff who have limited knowledge of the job itself or of the hiring managers needs or expectations for the position.
- Finally, delays in interviewing candidates and making selections may result from lack of pre-planning and established procedures, as that could be implemented as soon as the certificate is received. Return of certificates can be delayed for any number of the following reasons:
 - Lack of pre-planning or established procedures regarding panel, interview and reference questions, outline of interview timeframe
 - Unavailability of selecting official or applicants for interviews
 - Difficulty receiving timely reference responses.
 - Quality of applicants on certificate does not meet hiring office expectations
 - Hiring office does not make a selection in the specified timeframe.
 - In situations where both DE and Merit Promotion (MP) are used, the hiring office may wait to act until all certificates are available.
 - Selecting official is replaced or other organizational change affects the hiring office.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks:

Management's role with regard to improving timely performance at key stages of the hiring process has been clarified and communicated throughout the Agency, and the performance of hiring offices as partners in the hiring process is tracked and reported on a regular basis.

Metric: Managers timelines are tracked for:

- (a) Submittal of human resources actions to SSC.
- (b) Subject matter expert works with human resources on job analysis, assessment method.
- (c) Selection of candidate once the certificate provided by SSC.

Primary Action Planning Team

Champion: **Virdella Denwiddie, Acting Director, Human Capital Management Division**

Members: **SSCs, Regional HROs, PMOs, OHR, hiring managers and SMEs from across the Agency**

Action Steps

| Actions to be Taken | Key Deliverables/Output | Start Date/ End Date | Responsible Party (Parties) | Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed |
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| 4a) Workforce Planning- work with managers and leadership in Regions and Program Offices to coordinate workforce planning processes that facilitates advance planning for vacancy utilization, rather than determining these needs when the position becomes vacant. Monitor timeline from time of initial request to receipt in SSC. (#1 - Source: FY09 Action Plan) | HROs/PMOs - integrate workforce planning practices in their daily and long-term hiring and staffing decision-making. - Each office/region (PMOs/HROs) provides a status update to OHR-HCMD on any plans or procedures to address this issue. OHR - publish SWAT's time-to-hire charts | 10/30/10 and semi-annually until completed 7/15/10 and quarterly | HROs and PMOs OHR Lead - Debbi Hart | |
| 4b) Develop “Supervisor’s Toolkit” which provides timely and simple hiring advice and overviews that are available on-line - Develop a recruiting strategy quick guide for Hiring Managers/Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)/Program HR Liaisons for distribution through HROs/PMOs with SF52 action packages (#2b1 - Source: FY09 Action Plan) | Updated “Supervisor’s Toolkit” completed All SSCs - provide a status update to OHR on deployment of Supervisor's Toolkit and related guides for hiring managers. | Update 10/30/10 and quarterly until completed | SSCs OHR with HROs/PMOs' input Lead – Sheron Johnson | |
| 4c) Develop training for SMEs and hiring managers on the effective, efficient, and timely ways to recruit and hire well-qualified individuals using the hiring process (including writing/ | HCMD identify training needs in collaboration with EPA's HR community and work with OPM's Mobile Assessment Teams to develop and provide train-the- | 8/01/10 - 3/30/10 Develop plan and | OHR-HCMD SSCs PMOs HROs | |

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| <p>classifying position descriptions, job analysis, assessment tools, EZhire library, etc). (#2b3 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> <p>Status: Current request with OPM, as part of draft training plan, involves multi-faceted training for SSCs, Managers/SMEs on category rating/recruitment initiatives to be rolled out by end of August. Intent is to also include tutorials/on-line training which can be accessed ongoing/as needed.</p> | <p>trainer or other appropriate training</p> <p>Training classes are well-published and well-attended by targeted audiences. Improved knowledge and skills levels are apparent by the improved quality of the hiring process.</p> | <p>schedule training</p> | <p>Lead – Gerri McCann</p> | |
| <p>4d) Continue to strengthen strategic front-end communication between the HR Specialist and the hiring office about the target position and the recruitment method most likely to yield high-quality applicants. (#2b2 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> <p>Status: SSCs are incorporating more recruitment strategy meetings into their practices. Current request with OPM, as part of draft training plan, involves multi-faceted training for SSCs, Managers/SMEs on category rating/recruitment initiatives to be rolled out by end of August. Develop “bite-size” training for managers/SMEs.</p> | <p>Managers and HR Specialists participate in recruitment strategy meetings that improve mutual understanding about the roles on managers and HR Specialists.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Update 10/30/10 and quarterly thereafter</p> | <p>HROs PMOs SSCs</p> <p>Lead - Sheron Johnson</p> | <p>Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly.</p> |
| <p>4e) Determine competencies of HR staff and supplement identified skills gaps by providing relevant and necessary training to develop an expert and knowledgeable staff base.</p> | <p>Individual training needs are assessed and addressed</p> <p>Initial training completed and thereafter as needed</p> | <p>8/01/10 - 9/30/11</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>SSCs</p> <p>Lead - Pat Watson</p> | <p>Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly.</p> |
| <p>4f) Establish accountability framework for review of this initiative to determine effectiveness of hiring reform changes and impact on applicant and hiring managers’ satisfaction and to identify best practices that may be leveraged throughout the Agency.</p> | <p>System which provides feedback on action status and impact on survey responses.</p> | <p>10/30/10</p> | <p>OHR- HCMD, OHR-ITD, SSC Directors</p> <p>Lead – Alan Bogus</p> | |

2010 Hiring Reform Action Plan

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| Hiring Reform Initiative: 5. Work with OPM and the HR community to improve the quality and speed of agency hiring by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing substantially the time to hire Mission Critical Occupations and commonly filled positions • measuring the quality and speed of the hiring process, and • analyzing the causes of agency hiring problems and establishing timelines/targets for reducing them | Date: August 1, 2010 |
| Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional or procedural barriers to ‘sharing’ certificates for similar positions within the Agency. Lack of use of ‘open recruit’ actions for positions with similar requirements and multiple vacancies • Quality and timeliness of HR instructions and feedback to the submitting office varies. • Knowledge of SMEs about the position and the job analysis, questions, identification process, and availability to participate varies widely. • EPA’s current approach to job analysis process is not well-articulated and sometimes requires several passbacks between the HR Specialist and the SME. • Certificates may not be issued or returned on a timely basis. • Delays may result when the selected candidate is slow to respond to a tentative (or final) offer, or the candidate is slow to submit required documentation, including information needed for the background investigation. | |
| Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Specialist’s instructions to and personal interactions with the SME varies with skill level and workload. • There are skills gaps among the HR Specialists, many of whom are new to HR and/or the SSCs. • JOA development is time consuming and difficult for HR Specialists, SMEs and hiring officials who do not use process on regular basis. Instructions not perceived as clear, current process involves several communications to resolve issues. • The EZHire question library is widely regarded as difficult to use and questions as poor quality. Questions in the library may be repetitive, inadequate, or hard to find. “Applicant Assessment” questions are viewed with suspicion by the hiring office because some applicants seem to overstate their qualifications. Long-answer responses are seen as necessary to compensate for the lack of information provided by other questions and the resume. • If medical monitoring (examinations) or relocation is involved, there are additional processes/documents and additional time is required. The candidate may request higher pay based on superior qualifications or a recruitment incentive, which may cause additional delays pending formal request from the hiring office and SSC approval. The candidate may initially accept, then decline prior to on-boarding causing a need to reissue the certificate or start over. • Selected candidates do not realize the need for the timely review of security forms; and timely notification of the security forms varies. • All required documents must be available to the HR Specialist before an official offer may be made; the start date may need to be negotiated. The candidate may need to relocate and/or fulfill commitments of his/her current job; if the candidate is coming from another Federal agency, the SSC must obtain an SF-75 from the releasing agency. Releasing agencies’ response times vary widely. • The release and on-boarding process is not easily structured and consistent to enable a quick entry. | |
| Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks: | |

The hiring process will be timely, and overall time-to-hire will be reduced; SMEs and hiring managers will be involved in the hiring and recruitment process, HR Specialists will provide high quality and timely advice and guidance to hiring officials and SMEs, high-quality applicants will apply based upon quality job opportunity announcements, while the HR specialists provide high quality candidates to the hiring official for selection.

Metric: End-to-end timeliness improves.

Primary Action Planning Team

Champion: **Suzanne Roberts, Director, Shared Service Center-RTP**

Members: **SSCs, Regional HROs, PMOs, OHR, hiring managers and SMEs from across the Agency**

Action Steps

| Actions to be Taken | Key Deliverables/Output | Start Date/ End Date | Responsible Party (Parties) | Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed |
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| 5a) Consider establishment of central repository of standard PDs or templates for customization as needed. (#3a2) - Source: FY09 Action Plan) | 5a) Improved timeframe and process for developing new position descriptions. | 1/30/11 - 9/30/11 Provide quarterly update | SSCs Lead Individual- <i>Suzanne Roberts</i> | Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly. |
| <p>Job Analysis and Recruitment Strategies:</p> <p>5b1) Consider use of standing recruitments; OPM shared registers (develop consistent procedures for how/when to use); ‘multiple vacancies’ advertisement; standardized PDs to allow for cert-sharing</p> <p>5b2) Review current job analysis guidance and revise to incorporate hiring reform guidance as needed.</p> <p>5b3) Develop a generic guide to optimize EZ Hire question strategies for HR Specialists and SMEs</p> <p>5b4) Deploy standard training on the use of EZ Hire assessments for HR Specialists (and potentially SMEs)</p> | <p>5b1) Improved flexibility for announcing positions, issuing certificates</p> <p>5b2) Comprehensive job analysis guidance that articulate responsibilities, timelines and expected products.</p> <p>5b3) EZhire guide that clearly identifies steps for assessing and inserting questions.</p> <p>5b4) HR staff, SMEs appropriate other staff able to apply improved understanding of process to affect quality and timeliness of job analysis process.</p> | 8/01/10 - 9/30/11 Provide quarterly update | SSCs in collaboration with PMOs/ HROs OHR-HCMD OHR-ITD Lead – 5b1 – 5b4 <i>Pat Watson/Cathy McLaughlin</i> | |
| 5c) Obtain consultation from OPM’s Mobile Assistance Team on: ● Developing standardized assessment | Improve speed, quality and consistency of recruitment and assessment process. | 08/01/10 10/30/11 Provide | OHR-HCMD, HROs, SSCs | |

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| <p>strategies for commonly-hired and high-volume positions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing knowledge-based assessments (testing) for some commonly filled technical positions | | quarterly update | Lead – <i>Gerri McCann</i> | |
| <p>5d) Create a working group to devise strategies or plans to address the current EZ Hire question library:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start over by building a new question library, • Establish multiple workgroups to revise existing questions, or • Hire a contractor to re-engineer the current library. • Develop strategy for adding new questions as needed to the EZ Hire library. (#4 - Source: FY09 Action Plan) <p>Status:</p> <p>EZ-Hire system updates implemented in April 2010, with enhanced functionality. EZ-Hire library questions were edited to correct historical grammar/spelling issues; however, options and decision on more comprehensive approach to address library concerns/issues still to be addressed.</p> | <p>Create working group. Decision on how to address EZhire library issues</p> | <p>10/30/10 Provide quarterly updates</p> | <p>OHR-ITD, OHR-HCMD, SSCs PMOs, HROs</p> <p>Lead - <i>Cathy McLaughlin/Scott Monroe</i></p> | |
| <p>5e) Increased standardization with case folders -The new version of EZHire, implemented in March 2010, can create a case folder for each announcement that contains supporting documentation. This system will enable SSCs to create a list of “model” cases that HR Specialists may use to avoid having to create JOAs from scratch. (#5a2 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> <p>Status: Decision pending with SSC /ITD</p> | <p>Increased standardization that improves quality and efficiency of recruitment and enhances accountability</p> | <p>1/30/11 Provide quarterly updates</p> | <p>SSCs OHR - Policy OHR - HCMD OHR – ITD</p> <p>Lead – <i>Sheron Johnson</i></p> | |

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| Directors on conversion of recruitment case files from manual to on-line. | | | | |
| <p>5f) Explore the development of hiring office guides or templates to structure approach for reviewing/selecting candidates, e.g., timeline for actions to be taken after the certificate is received (process of reviewing applications, conducting interviews, and checking references, including determining the interview methods and questions to be used as well as who will conduct interviews and reference checks). (#7 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> <p>Status: This has been partially completed. Some hiring offices have standardized, structured processes. Need to obtain and share best practices to all HROs/PMOs.</p> | Each hiring organization has a standard process for receipt, reviewing, interviewing and vouchering candidates certified, resulting in the timely return of certificates to HR office. | Update by 10/30/10 And quarterly until completed | <p>OHR PMOs/HROs SSCs Workgroup,</p> <p>Lead – Randy M Brady-RTP</p> | |
| <p>5g) Standardize on-boarding processes across SSC's ensuring optimal candidate notification and process handling, and appropriate hiring office involvement in candidate communication. (#9a2 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> <p>Status: 9a2) SSCs have standard orientation processes in place; pending discussion of a consistent customer service standard for issuance of selection letters and employee ID information to customers.</p> | Standardized process developed to improve quality of on-boarding and increase employee satisfaction. | Update 10/30/10 And quarterly | <p>SSCs, OHR-ITD OHR - Employee Development and Services Division</p> <p>Lead - Noel Jamison</p> | Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly. |
| <p>5h) Automation in EOD process - Determine feasibility of implementing an entry-on-duty system (EODS) as part of EPA's HR-LOB implementation to expedite candidates' access to and submission of required documentation. Explore any cost-effective interim processes to move EPA toward this objective in the intervening two years. (#9a3 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> | OHR-ITD - Determination made on feasibility of implementing an EOD system as part of EPA's HR-LOB implementation; report determinations to OHR. | By 10/30/10 | <p>SSCs, OHR- ITD</p> <p>Lead - Cathy McLaughlin</p> | Determine if there are budget implications and proceed accordingly. |
| 5i) Develop an SSC timeliness standard for | Timeliness standard developed. | By | SSCs | |

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| <p>issuance of the official offer after all required documents are in hand. (#10a1 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> <p>Status: SSCs pending discussion of a consistent customer service standard for issuance of selection letters and employee ID information to customers, to be determined 7/2010.</p> | | 8/30/10 | <p>Lead - <i>Sheron Johnson</i></p> | |
| <p>5j) Consider use of HRACTS to track the SF-75 request and other pre-employment documents requested from other agencies. (#10a2 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> | Improved action-tracking system. | By 1/30/11 | <p>SSCs</p> <p>Lead - <i>Suzanne Roberts</i></p> | |
| <p>5k) Hiring Office Process Improvements - Regions and Program Offices - examine their processes for timeliness improvement opportunities and best practices (#2a2 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> <p>Status: Conversations ongoing with HROs and PMOs on this item.</p> | <p>All regions and program offices institute processes to improve timeliness;</p> <p>Compendium of best practices available for review and adaptation.</p> | <p>Status by 10/30/10</p> <p>1/30/11</p> | <p>HROs and PMOs</p> <p>Lead – <i>Lora Culver</i> <i>Jacqueline Wynn-Bryant</i></p> | |
| <p>5l) Perform Regular Quality Assessments - Establish a methodology, separate from routine accountability and human capital auditing, to perform quality checks on the effectiveness of the overall hiring process as well as particular hiring process reforms.</p> | Using manager and applicant survey data, hiring timeline data, and other available data, Agency hiring practices are regularly assessed to determine improvements and remaining challenges in the quality and speed of hiring. | Status updates by 1/30/11 and quarterly thereafter | <p>SSCs, SSC Liaison, HCMD</p> <p>Lead - <i>Marvin Schulman</i></p> | |
| <p>5m) Explore revising the tracking system if possible to include reasons why recruitments are delayed or cancelled or no selection was made to support better understanding of when recruitment failures occur and appropriate problem analysis. Add new action status drop down box and menu to track recruitment status (#8 - Source: FY09 Action Plan)</p> | SSC-RTP – Improve ability to track status/results of recruitment actions. | By 8/30/10 | <p>RTP-SSC</p> <p>Lead – <i>Suzanne Roberts</i></p> | |
| <p>5m) Review older position descriptions - Continue to follow the new SSC policy which requires all PDs older than five years to be</p> | Standard guidance issued in 2009 and implementation will occur over time to resolve prior barriers. | Status update by 1/30/11 | <p>SSCs</p> <p>Lead - <i>Marvin</i></p> | |

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| reviewed for classification purposes to ensure PDs meet OPM classification standards and to increase the utility of existing PDs for reuse. (#3a1 - Source: FY09 Action Plan) | | and semi-annually thereafter | <i>Schulman</i> | |
| 5n) Establish accountability framework for review of this initiative to determine effectiveness of hiring reform changes and impact on applicant and hiring managers' satisfaction and to identify best practices that may be leveraged throughout the Agency. | System which provides feedback on action status and impact on survey responses. | 10/30/10 | OHR- HCMD, OHR-ITD, SSC Directors Lead – <i>Alan Bogus</i> | |
| | | | | |
| Completed Actions | | | | |
| Streamline and standardize vacancy announcements using templates based on series and qualifications. (#5a1 - Source: FY09 Action Plan) | Completed. Further improvements to streamlined announcement language implemented with new EZ-Hire system April, 2010. | Completed 4/2010 | | |
| Continue implementation and improvement of Personnel Security Branch's (PSB's) new dashboard that enables hiring offices and SSCs to track the status of background investigation actions. (#9a1 - Source: FY09 Action Plan) | | Completed 2/2010 | | |

2010 Hiring Reform Action Plan

Hiring Reform Initiative:

6. Notify individuals applying for Federal employment through USAJOBS, an OPM-approved Federal web-based employment search portal, about the status of their application at key stages in the application process

Date:

August 1, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed:

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?):

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks:

Primary Action Planning Team

Champion: Cathy McLaughlin, Deputy Director, Information Technology Division

Members: SSC Directors

Metric: Application Satisfaction Survey Results Improve

Action Steps

| Actions to be Taken | Key Deliverables/Output | Start Date/ End Date | Responsible Party (Parties) | Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed |
|--|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| – EPA is fully integrated with the USAJOBS Applicant Status Update feature. The HR Specialist currently notifies applicants at the 4 key touch points throughout the hiring process. | Applicants are sent automatic e-mail notice within 1-hour of any status changes updated to the system | Completed 2/10 | OHR-ITD, SSC Directors | |